

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 2037

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ELAB PINT DA US

SUBJ: HOPE COMPUTER CASE - JUDGMENT PROVOKES

NATIONWIDE WORK STOPPAGE

REF: COPENHAGEN 1884

SUMMARY: ONE OF NINE UNION LEADERS INDICATED FOR
ILLEGALLY BLOCKADING SMALL AMERICAN COMPUTER MANUFACTURER
IN HADSUND WAS FOUND GUILTY IN VERDICT PUBLISHED
AUGUST 24. DECISION HAS PROVOKED MASSIVE TRADE UNION
REACTION, WITH THOUSANDS OF WORKERS ON STRIKE IN
PROTEST AUGUST 27. END SUMMARY.

1. VERDICT WAS ANNOUNCED FRIDAY AFTERNOON AUGUST 24

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IN TRIAL OF NINE UNION LEADERS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN

BLACKADE OF HOPE COMPUTER COMPANY IN HADSUND. DECISION BY DISTRICT COURT'S THREE JUDGES FOUND EIGHT OF NINE NOT GUILTY; THE NINTH, WILLY BARTHOLUMAEUSSEN, LOCAL UNION CHAIRMAN (GENERAL AND SPECIAL WORKERS UNION DASF) WAS FOUND GUILTY UNDER ARTICLE 261 - DEPRIVATION OF A PERSON'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT - AND FINED TWELVE HUNDRED KRONER (APPROX. TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS). VERDICT ESTABLISHED FACT THAT DEMONSTRATORS HAD EFFECTIVELY SURROUNDED PLANT BUILDING AND PREVENTED EMPLOYEES FROM LEAVING PREMISES BY THREATENING VIOLENCE UNTIL FIRM'S DANISH DIRECTOR, BARSOE-CARNFELDT, SINGED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT. CHARGES AGAINST EIGHT WERE DISMISSED ON GROUNDS THAT EACH HAD PLAYED RELATIVELY MINOR ROLE; BARTHOLUMAEUSSEN, ON OTHER HAND, WAS FOUND GUILTY FOR HIS HAVING PLANNED AND VOTED FOR DEOMONSTRATION AND FOR HAVING LED DELEGATION INTO PLANT TO DEMAND THAT DIRECTOR SIGN LABOR CONTRACT.

(COMMENT: VERDICT AND SENTENCE WERE AS LENIENT AS POSSIBLE, WHILE STILL PRESERVING PRINCIPLE THAT ILLEGAL ACT HAD OCCURRED. VERDICT EXPRESSLY MENTIONED AS MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES FACT THAT DANISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WAS LEGITIMATELY CONCERNED WITH ITS CONTINUED ABILITY TO IMPROVE ITS MEMBERS' CONDITIOS OF WORK, ESPECIALLY AFTER DANISH ACCESSION TO COMMON MARKET, AND THAT STATEMENTS OF BARSOE-CARNFELDT REINFORCED THAT LEGITIMATE CONCERN.)

2. REACTIONS: ALTHOUGH LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON TIMING OF VERDICT WAS PROBABLY INTENDED (AND LABOR PRESS PUBLICALLY CHARGED THAT IT WAS SO INTENDED) TO PREVENT WORK STOPPAGES, THAT TACTIC BACK-FIRED AND WEEK-END WAS USED TO PREPARE SO-CALLED "SPONTANEOUS STOPPAGES" TODAY. GOVERNMENT AND TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) PAPER, AKTUELT, FOR EXAMPLE, PREDICTED IN HEADLIES AUG 26 THAT JUDGMENT WOULD STIMULATE NATIONWIDE PROTEST STRIKE. THAT PREDICTION HAS BEEN BORNE OUT DURING COURSE OF TODAY. THOUSANDS OF WORKERS AND ALSMOST ALL LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS THROUGHOUT DENMARK HAVE BEEN AFFECTED. COPENHAGEN FREEPORT CLOSED EARLY TODAY AND KASTRUP

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AIRPORT CEASED OPERATIONS AT 1500, DUE TO STRIKE BY FUEL TRUCK OPERATIONS. ACCORDING TO SPOKESMAN OF DANISH EMPLOYERS FEDERATION (DA), CURRENT WORK STOPPAGE IS MOST EXTENSIVE SUCH ACTION IN MANY YEARS. UNDER NEW RULES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, SPONTANEOUS WORK STOPPAGES LASTING LESS THAN 24 HOURS ARE LEGAL, SO IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT WORK WILL RECOMMENCE DURING COURSE OF AUGUST 28. DANISH LO HAS TAKEN CAUTIOUS STANCE, EXPRESSION SYMPATHY WITH

STRIKE BUT URGING WORKERS TO AVOID ILLEGAL ACTIONS.
DANIS EMPLOYERS FEDERATION IS TAKING LOWEST POSSIBLE
PROFILE, SINCE THEY HAVE NO REASON TO SUPPORT BARSOE-
CARNFELDT'S CRUSADE AGAINST JOINING EMPLOYER'S FEDERATION
OR PERMITTING FIRM'S EMPLOYEES TO BE ORGANIZED.

3. COMMENT: CASE HAS BEEN ESCALATED DUE PRIMARILY TO
CONTROVERSIAL PERSONALITY OF FIRM'S DANISH DIRECTOR,
WHO HAS COME TO REPRESENT "AMERICAN" METHOD OF LABOR-
MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIPS.
DUNNIGAN

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